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The Vast of Night

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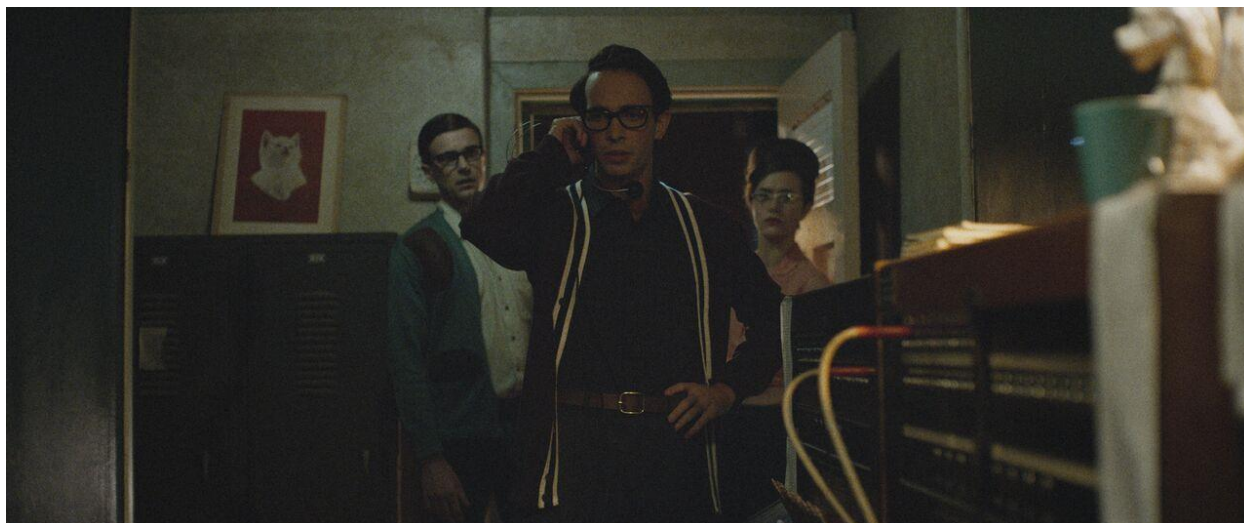
The Vast of Night

Abstract

This is a film review of *The Vast of Night* (2019) directed by Andrew Patterson.

Author Notes

William Blizek is the Founding Editor of the Journal of Religion and Film, and is Professor of Philosophy and Religion at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. He is also the editor of the Continuum Companion to Religion and Film (2009).



The Vast of Night (2019), dir. Andrew Patterson

In the vastness of the night in the 1950s, Cayuga, a small town in New Mexico encounters some strange sounds on the phone lines. Everett, a local radio DJ at WOTW, and Fay, a high school girl who works as a telephone operator, take on the task of finding out where the sounds come from. It is an eerie journey, one that raises the hair on your neck. It's a spooky search that these two charming characters undertake, and it is one that brings you a chill to you now and then. In the end, what do they find? You'll have to see the film to find out the answer to that question, as I don't want to spoil it. But you will enjoy the ride.

What makes the movie interesting to those of us who study religion is that it raises the question of what happens if we find out that there are other intelligent life forms in the universe, in the vast of night. How would we think differently about our place in the universe if there were other intelligent creatures sharing the universe with us? This question does not depend upon the nature of the intelligent creatures, just the existence of other creatures that might be like us. And what would the existence of other intelligent creatures mean for our understanding of God? What kind of god would create different kinds of intelligent beings in the universe? Why would God

create different kinds of intelligent creatures? How many different kinds of intelligent creatures would God create?

See the movie. Then plan on a cup of coffee (or two) or a glass of wine (or more) with friends to explore the possibilities.